

Claims:

1. A holder for surgical instruments, said instruments being of the type having a distal portion for engagement with a patient during surgery and a proximal portion for manipulation by a surgeon, said holder comprising a body, a plurality of retainers
5 mounted on or in the body and a separator located between adjacent retainers, wherein location of the distal portion of a surgical instrument in or by a retainer substantially separates the distal portion of the surgical instrument against contact with the distal portion of a surgical instrument located in an adjacent retainer and the distal portions of the surgical instrument being substantially enclosed by the retainer.
- 10 2. A holder according to claim 1 wherein a retained instrument is oriented such that its proximal portion projects from the body of the holder.
3. A holder according to either claim 1 or claim 2 wherein a retainer defines a cavity in the body of the holder.
4. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims wherein a retainer is
15 separable from the body of the holder.
5. A holder according to claim 4 further comprising an engagement means to engage a retainer with the holder and a fastener to fasten a retainer to the holder.
6. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the retainer comprises a body which passes through an aperture in the holder and a fastening portion
20 which is fastened to the body of the holder.
7. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the retainer comprises an aperture at its distal end.
8. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the retainer defines an elongated and tapered cavity.
- 25 9. A holder according to claim 8 wherein the retainer has an oval or bi-lobed cross section.
10. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims comprising a holding portion and a collecting portion.
11. A holder according to claim 10 wherein the collecting portion is detachable.
- 30 12. A holder according to either 10 or claim 11 wherein instruments are held in the retainers so as to not contact the collecting portion.

13. A holder according to any one of claims 10, 11 or 12 wherein the holder is shaped so that the holder or the holding portion of the holder is stackable with a plurality of like-shaped holders (or holding portions).
14. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the collecting
5 portion is shaped so that it is stackable with a plurality of like-shaped collecting portions.
15. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims comprising an engagement portion to engage another surgical tray or holder.
16. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising a portion for holding other surgical items.
- 10 17. A holder according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising a device for removal of medical sharps from medical implements comprising a body defining an aperture wherein at least one portion of the body projects into the aperture and said portion comprises a lip extending substantially perpendicular to the plane of the body defining the aperture so as to engage the medical sharp for removal from the medical
15 implement.
18. A holder according to claim 17 wherein the aperture is a generally rounded rectangular shape and is missing one corner due to the projection of the body into the aperture.
19. A holder according to claim 17 or claim 18 wherein the lip extends:
- 20 a. less than half way around the perimeter of the aperture;
- b. half way across the projection from the body into the aperture; and
- c. extends perpendicularly to the plane of the body from which the aperture is defined.
20. A holder according to any one of claims 17 to 19 wherein a portion of the body
25 comprises a tapered or serrated edge to enable removal of screw-threaded sharps from medical instruments.
21. A device for removal of medical sharps from medical implements comprising a body defining an aperture wherein at least one portion of the body projects into the aperture and said portion comprises a lip extending substantially perpendicular to the
30 plane of the body defining the aperture so as to engage the medical sharp for removal from the medical implement.

22. A device according to claim 21 wherein the aperture is a generally rounded rectangular shape and is missing one corner due to the projection of the body into the aperture.
23. A device according to claim 21 or claim 22 wherein the lip extends:
- 5 a. less than half way around the perimeter of the aperture;
- b. half way across the projection from the body into the aperture; and
- c. extends perpendicularly to the plane of the body from which the aperture is defined.
24. A device according to any one of claims 21 to 23 wherein a portion of the body
- 10 comprises a tapered or serrated edge to enable removal of screw-threaded sharps from medical instruments.
25. A retainer suitable for use with a holder for surgical instruments according to claim 1 wherein the distal portion of a surgical instruments retained in the retainer is enclosed by the retainer.
- 15 26. A retainer according to claim 25 wherein the retainer defines a cavity in the body of the holder.
27. A retainer according to either claim 25 or claim 26 capable of being separately reversibly fastened in apertures in the body of a holder.
28. A retainer according to any one of claims 25 to 27 comprising an aperture at the
- 20 distal end.
29. A retainer according to any one of claims 25 to 28 comprising an elongated and tapered cavity.
30. A retainer according to claim 29 wherein the cavity has an oval or bi-lobed cross section.
- 25 31. A retainer according to any one of claims 25 to 30 which retains an instrument by engaging it.
32. A method of instrument use during surgery comprising the steps of
- a. utilizing a surgical instrument during surgery;
- b. locating the surgical instrument in a retainer of a surgical instrument holder
- 30 according to any one of claims 1 to 31;

- c. removing the surgical instrument from the holder for further surgical use;
and
- d. replacing the surgical instrument in the holder following suitable surgical use.

5 33. A method according to claim 32 wherein the nurse or surgical assistant is responsible for managing the process of use of the surgical instrument holder.

34. A method according to either claim 32 or claim 33 comprising a further step of collecting materials in a collecting portion associated with the holder.

10 35. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 34 further comprising the step of removing a surgical or medical sharp by engaging the sharp with a sharp removal means comprising a body defining an aperture wherein at least one portion of the body projects into the aperture and said portion comprises a lip extending substantially perpendicular to the plane of the body defining the aperture so as to engage the medical sharp for removal from the medical or surgical implement.

15 36. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 35 further comprising the step of retaining other surgical items in a portion of the holding portion.

37. A method according to any one of claims 32 to 36 comprising the step of assembling a holder from various components.